

Fittipahall District of Saffnai. Ceylon Jan'y 1817

My dear Parents, Brothers & Sisters.

By the Brig Dryade in which I came to this country I sent you letters & an extract of my journal which I keep which on the passage. By the same conveyance I sent letters to several friends. & among the number was my worthy friend Mrs. Miller of Maidford all of which I hope <sup>have</sup> been received. I have written ever since to Maillford I should have written oftener, but for these reasons. I have been in a moving & consequently in an unsettled state until within a short time, & there is no direct communication between this Island & America as no American ships touch here for trade, so that we are obliged to send all our letters by mail to the care of some friend at Calcutta or some other port on the continent that they may be put on board some American vessel. I have received a few letters from my American friends but none from my particular relations. It is now fifteen months since I left the shores of my beloved country, & I frequently notice the arrival of ships from different ports in N. Eng. & at some of the ports in India, where I have been perusing the papers of this country. I am now looking with no little anxiety for the mail to bring me letters from some of my family. I hope I shall not have long to wait. It is cold water to a thirsty soul" so would news be to me from my friends.

My letters gave you some account of our very pleasant voyage & the favourable reception we received from our landing at Colombo & afterwards. God was pleased to give us favour in the sight of strangers in this strange land. The people here especially the principal men in authority, ~~here~~, have showed us no little ~~friend~~ kindness.

They have expressed to us a strong desire that we would remain on the Island & teach to these ignorant & degraded natives the holy religion of our Divine & compassionate Saviour. O! that I could describe to you my feelings when comparing the wretched condition of these idolatrous people, with the highly favoured people of my native land. This is emphatically a land of darkness where no light is.

While contrasting the state of the two countries I cannot forbear to exclaim—ban sinners, deserving of nothing but indignation & wrath tribulation & anguish forever & ever," but yet enjoying a Gospel which freely <sup>offers</sup> pardon & eternal life to them on the most consistent & advantageous terms—can such ~~such~~ sinners lightly esteem such a Gospel?

Can they refuse not to esteem it, as it is, indeed, good news—the astonishing exhibition of the wonderful love of God to his ingrateful & rebellious creatures. But then I recollect that multitudes there who do enjoy this Gospel do neglect & despise it. But very few indeed, who are taught it in its greatest purity know experimentally its value, & drink in its heavenly spirit. How much more tolerable will it be for this benighted people with all their crimes in the day of judgment than for Gospel hardened sinners however moral may have been their external conduct. I tremble for the careless sinners of my highly favoured Country when I see them neglect that Gospel which offers to them pardon & eternal life, lest they continue to

neglect. 'till it, he said of them - The harvest is past the summer  
is ended (other) souls not saved. Against such these very heathen  
will rise up in the day of judgment, & condemn them.

May this never be the awful condition of any one of our family - of  
our relations or our friends. I have now arrived on missionary  
grounds, & commenced the work, to which I have for several years  
been looking forward. I bless God that he has seen fit to put me  
into the ministry, & to send me with the gospel of reconciliation to this  
land of Pagan darkness. It is a work in which I am altogether  
unworthy to be engaged. But since the great head of the Church  
has pleased to entrust his word in earthen vessels that the excellency  
of the power may be of God & not of us. I earnestly pray that I  
may be found faithful - ever remembering from whence all my  
sufficiency & success must come - And I ask you my Parents  
brothers & sisters to remember me in your prayers? You know how  
much I need your prayers in this arduous & difficult work.

In view of the solemn responsibility of the station in which I  
am placed, & the utter insufficiency of all human means of themselves to turn  
a single idolater from the worship of his idols to the service & love  
of the only living & true God. I am led to enquire. Who is sufficient for  
for these things? But then I am animated with the thought that  
the cause is the Lord's. He is engaged to carry it on - It is his  
will to give to his Son the heathen for his inheritance; & when  
he sees it to be best, he will make his word like the fire &  
the hammer to break in pieces the flinty rock; & cause even these  
superstitious heathen to bow in sweet subjection to the obedience  
of Christ. When my heart is rightly affected with this subject  
I find it pleasant to sow the seeds of the word & leave it with  
the great Lord of the harvest to send the early & latter rains till  
it spring up & bring forth fruit even in this barren desert.

It is now about three months since I came  
with Mr & Mrs Poor to reside at this place. Ever since we came we  
have been preaching to those people who would come to hear us, in  
our own house, & those around us who will not come to hear  
we go to their houses & tell them about the religion of our  
compassionate Saviour & urge them to believe in him & that  
their sins may be pardoned. We preach & talk to this people  
as yet wholly by an interpreter & when we have no interpreter  
with us we are almost as dumb men before them. The  
country around us is very thickly inhabited. If we call at any  
house & spend half an hour it is very common to have from  
forty to sixty & sometimes more collect to see us. The people are  
very willing to us & listen attentively to what we say, but we  
find them very ignorant & much attached to their heathenish  
religion, & I suspect that our conversation & preaching as yet has  
produced very few if any lasting impressions upon their minds  
of most of them. But the residence of the Spirit is with him  
who will in his own time bring even this degraded people to a saving knowledge  
of his truth as it is in Jesus.